

GERMANY IS ASKED IF UNDERSEA BOAT ATTACKED SUSSEX

Formal Inquiry of Berlin Government a Step Toward Positive Action.

PRESIDENT MAY SUBMIT THE CASE TO CONGRESS

Disavowal by Germany Might Not Be Entirely Satisfactory to Washington.

ARMAMENT ISSUE IS RAISED

Putting Blame on Commander Would Imply Inability to Make Reliable Distinction as to Status of Vessels.

The United States has inquired of Germany, through Ambassador Gerard, whether any of its submarines torpedoed the British channel steamer Sussex.

Secretary Lansing announced after the cabinet meeting today that it had been decided to make such an inquiry, and later it was learned that the inquiry had been made, and in fact, probably is already in Berlin. The present status of the communication is that of an inquiry; it was not advanced to the stage of a protest or a demand.

Immediate Break Unlikely.

While cabinet members declared the situation grave they took the position that a break with Germany was not an immediate prospect. It was said, however, that if Germany admitted torpedoing the Sussex a situation would be brought about which would be most serious.

Cabinet members agreed that the decision would depend much upon Germany's reply to the American inquiry. Should Germany deny that one of her submarines attacked the Sussex, the American government would reach its conclusion from the evidence now being collected by its diplomatic representatives abroad.

Cabinet members said the decision to make an inquiry of Germany was in line with the policy of collecting all information before a decision is reached. Should Germany admit the attack but claim the submarine commander exceeded his orders, officials believed that it would be impracticable for submarine commanders to attempt to distinguish between armed and unarmed vessels.

The possibility that the attack on the Sussex might lead to a general tearing up of the submarine issue was discussed at the cabinet meeting.

Evidence Before Cabinet.

All evidence thus far received relating to the sinking of the steamship Englishman and the damaging of the Sussex by explosion, with American inquiries to several American consuls in Germany, was assembled at the State Department for submission to the cabinet.

At the evidence at hand indicates that the steamers were torpedoed without warning, with the probable loss of one American life on the Englishman and one on the Sussex. President Wilson is awaiting with deep concern receipt of positive proof.

It is said that the cabinet is considering laying the whole submarine question before Congress presently, but that it is not yet decided whether the act was in violation of instructions.

Ambassador Is Due Today.

Ambassador Bernstorff, who has been away for several days, was due to return today, and it was expected that he would consult with Secretary Lansing for the situation.

It is stated authoritatively that if a German submarine fired the torpedoes which sank the Englishman and damaged the Sussex, Germany would be asked to pay reparations and allow the United States to search the vessel in violation of instructions.

SAW PERIL TO BANK

Mayor Harrison Warned of Concern's Bad Condition, Says Witness.

CHICAGO, March 28.—James R. Forgan, chairman of the board of directors of the First National Bank, testifying today in the trial of William Lorrimer, said that about a month ago the failure of the La Salle Street Trust and Savings Bank, of which Lorrimer was president, caused him to fear that the La Salle Street National Bank, of which he was president, was in a precarious condition.

SUSSEX CASUALTIES NOT TO EXCEED 50

Persian Prince Believed to Be Victim of Channel Steamer Disaster.

AMERICAN WITNESS SAYS LIFEBELTS WERE ROTTEN

C. T. Crocker Also Criticizes Conduct of Some Members of the Vessel's Crew.

LONDON, March 28, 12:35 p.m.—The British agents of the company which operated the steamship Sussex said today the total of casualties was not expected to exceed fifty.

Persian Prince Probably Lost.

PARIS, March 28.—Prince Bahram of the reigning family of Persia, who was a passenger on board the Sussex, is still unaccounted for.

His father, Zilles Sultan, who is at present at Nice, has telegraphed to the foreign office in London and to the railroad company's offices and as neither is able to give him any information he has declared that he has practically given up hope regarding his son.

Says Lifebelts Were Rotten.

DOVER, March 28.—Some severe criticism of the lifebelts on the cross-channel steamer Sussex and of the conduct of some of the crew of the vessel was made by C. T. Crocker, an American survivor, at the inquest over the bodies of two men and a woman who lost their lives as a result of the explosion which damaged the steamer.

Mr. Crocker said that after the explosion there seemed to be a panic, but that it quieted down in a quarter of an hour. He saw some people trying to put on lifebelts, but the latter broke, as they were absolutely rotten. He put belts on two women and the same thing happened. The rotten ones being brought out new lifebelts, which were better. The rotten ones were hanging on the rails of the boat.

Boat Hanging in Air.

After the explosion, Mr. Crocker testified, he saw one boat hanging from a broken rope and people in the water. One end of the boat was hanging in the air and the other just touching the water. There was a terrible rush for the boats, which were overloaded, and some persons had to be got out of them. He saw many persons in the water, to whom rafts or ropes were thrown. Two or three of them were pulled out of the sea.

Criticism of the Crew.

"Did everybody behave well during the accident," the coroner asked of Mr. Crocker.

"The crew," replied Mr. Crocker, "did not appear very efficient. Some of them got champagne and the officers had to take it away."

Where Were Lifeboats Enough for All?

"Yes."

At the close of the inquest the coroner said there would be an inquiry by the government board of trade into the accident and particularly into the matter of the life preservers. The jury returned a verdict of death through ship being sunk by an enemy torpedo.

One of the bodies identified Monday was that of Giuseppe Cappa, twenty-nine years of age, whose passport had been issued at New York. A card attached to the passport shows that he was a member of the New York-Italian Journalists' Union.

U-BOAT DID NOT WARN MANCHESTER ENGINEER

Two Americans Make Affidavits as to Sinking of British Vessel.

LONDON, March 28, 4:20 p.m.—Two American citizens, Arthur Mackenzie of Savannah and Tom Fifer of Delaware, who were on board the British steamer Manchester Engineer, have made affidavits before the American consul that the steamer was torpedoed without notice, according to a Central News dispatch from Queenstown today. The members of her crew were taken aboard a tug.

Submarine Is Blamed.

The Central News says that the Manchester Engineer was torpedoed by a German submarine. It was first supposed that the vessel was not badly damaged, but she foundered while making for port in tow.

The steamer Manchester Engineer measured 4,302 tons gross. She was built in 1902 and was owned by the Manchester Liners, Limited, of Manchester.

Fenay Bridge Not Warned.

The British steamer Fenay Bridge, which was unarmed, was torpedoed without warning, says an admiralty statement issued last evening. The Fenay Bridge was on a voyage from Philadelphia for Hull. The report of her sinking was announced Sunday.

BRITISH NOW BEAR BURDEN OF BATTLE

Fighting on the Western Front Shifts to St. Elai Sector, in Belgium.

INFANTRY AROUND VERDUN IS ENJOYING A RESPITE

Artillery Continues Active West of the Meuse, But Is Silent East of the River.

LONDON, March 28.—The infantry continues inactive before Verdun and even the notable artillery fire reported for some days in the Vaux-Douaumont region east of the Meuse has slackened.

The German guns have resumed a heavy fire to the west of the river, however, shelling the French lines south of Malancourt, in the sector where the recent German drive took the crown prince's troops south to the edge of the Avocourt woods, from which a new attempt to debouch may now be preparing.

Surprise Attack by French.

A surprise attack by the French in the forest of Parroy, in Lorraine, is reported by Paris, a German trench being blown up, after which the attacking forces withdrew with some prisoners.

"The British infantry stormed Monday and took first and second line German trenches along a front of 600 yards at St. Elai," says a British official communication issued last evening.

The text of the statement reads:

Official British Report.

"This morning, after exploding mines, infantry of the Northumberland Fusiliers and Royal Fusiliers assaulted the German salient at St. Elai, successfully taking first and second line trenches on a front of some six hundred yards. Heavy casualties are known to have been caused to the enemy. Two officers and 168 men were taken prisoners.

"The artillery activity today has been mainly confined to the neighborhood of Angers, Walverghem, St. Elai and Wailly.

Last night and today there has been much sniping activity. At St. Elai we successfully exploded a mine. To the south of Neuville-St. Vaast and near Hozenzellern, redoubt, there has been crater fighting in which we were successful.

"The opposite Hulloch the enemy exploded mines last night, damaging our trenches and causing some casualties. We are working on the crater formed by the explosion.

Calm East of the Meuse.

PARIS, March 28, 11:30 a.m.—The French official statement given out this morning says there was no change in the Verdun region during the night. East of the Meuse all was calm and to the west of the river there were some artillery squalls.

The text of the communication reads as follows:

"Last night passed quietly to the east of the River Meuse. There was considerable activity on the part of the opposing forces to the west of the Meuse in the region of Malancourt, as well as in the Vaux region, but no change in the heights of the Meuse.

"In Lorraine, in the forest of Parroy, we delivered a surprise attack on a position of the enemy, the occupants of which were either killed or taken prisoner. In withdrawing we blew up the position.

"There has been nothing else of importance on the remainder of the front."

BITTER FIGHTING ALONG AUSTRO-ITALIAN FRONT

LONDON, March 28.—Bitter fighting is again taking place along the Austro-Italian front. The Austrians launched an attack on the Italian lines, but were repulsed. The Italians, in counter attacks, have not only succeeded in reconquering the position, but took Austrian trenches elsewhere on the front, according to the current Rome headquarters report.

RAID AGAINST SALONIKI BY GERMAN AVIATORS

LONDON, March 28.—A semi-official dispatch from Saloniki says that five German aeroplanes bombed Saloniki early Monday. As a result of the raid early civilians were killed and twenty-one wounded, the latter including a Greek official attached to the British department.

The Germans lost two aeroplanes, one being brought down near Lake Amotzo.

PRaises BRITISH EFFORTS.

Italian Commander-in-Chief Expresses Confidence in Victory.

LONDON, March 28.—Lieut. Gen. Count Cadorna, the Italian commander-in-chief, who has been visiting in England, on his departure telegraphed to Earl Kitchener, the British war secretary, as follows:

"During my short stay I have been able to appreciate the grand, the wonderful effort Great Britain is making for the noble cause to which the allies are devoting themselves. Your firm belief in victory is also my own."

Airmen Raid Turkish Base.

LONDON, March 28, 1:05 p.m.—A successful aerial raid on the Turkish advance base at Bir-el-Hassanah, 100 miles east of the Suez canal, is reported in a Reuter dispatch from Suez. The raid was made by British airmen March 24. Forty bombs were dropped on the Turkish camp, which was set on fire. All the airmen returned safely.



THE NEW PUZZLE GAME, FINDING VILLA.

Immediate Permission Asked Of Carranza to Use Railways FOR EARLY ACTION ON SHIPPING BILL

Note, Requesting Early Reply, Being Prepared by State Department to Be Forwarded to First Chief at Queretaro Today.

A memorandum to Gen. Carranza pressing for an immediate reply to the request for permission to use Mexican railroads in supplying American troops in pursuit of Villa, was prepared today at the State Department.

It will be forwarded to Queretaro probably late today, and be delivered by Special Representative Rodgers to Gen. Carranza and Gen. Obregon.

Unnecessary to Wait for Protocol.

The memorandum points out that the problem of supplying troops now more than 200 miles from the border is a pressing one and need not be delayed for the protocol covering the general subject. Gen. Carranza's suggestion as to modification and additions to the draft of the protocol are still under consideration in the State Department.

As considerable time may be required to bring the agreement into final form, the American government will ask that the immediate question of the use of the Mexican Northwestern lines be considered separately and at once.

Administration officials today were taking steps to aid Gen. Funston in overcoming difficulties met with in keeping open a 200-mile supply line to the American forces in Mexico.

Latest official reports at hand indicate that Gen. Pershing's advance base is in the region of El Valle and that Villa, who is reported to have got through the network of Carranza troops, is far to the southward.

Secretary Baker issued this statement last night:

"All information the department has

SUGAR FIGHT FORECAST.

Senate Resolution Extending Present Duty Until 1920 the Issue.

Reopening of the fight in the House over the repeal of the free sugar clause of the tariff was forecast today as a result of the action of the Senate Democratic caucus last night in voting 23 to 7 to substitute for the House repeal resolution a resolution extending the present duty of 1 cent a pound until 1920. The struggle is expected to come when the Senate proposal which was recommended by Democrats of the Senate finance committee is returned to the House for concurrence.

Louisiana senators lead the opposition to the substitute, declaring that a four-cent extension was no assurance to sugar growers and producers of that state, and that it would fail to restore activity to its sugar industry.

Petition for Review of Convictions.

W. G. Simpson, president, and S. D. Simpson, cashier of the American National Bank of Caldwell, Ida., have petitioned the Supreme Court of the United States to review their conviction in the Idaho federal courts on an indictment charging the latter with improperly issuing a certificate of deposit on the bank, and the former with abetting him. Each is under sentence to five years in the penitentiary under the conviction.

Physicians Are Embassy Attaches.

BERLIN, via London, March 28.—Four American physicians, who have been designated as special attaches of the embassy, have arrived at Berlin. They are Dr. D. J. McCarthy, tuberculosis expert, and Dr. Alonzo E. Taylor, food specialist, both of the University of Pennsylvania, and Dr. S. V. Irwin and Dr. J. F. Webster, both of Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. They will devote their attention exclusively to prison camp inspection.

SAYS NAVY WOULD NEED 225,000 MEN

Would Be Required by U. S. in War Time, Assistant Secretary Roosevelt Asserts.

GERMANY'S COSTS LESS TO BUILD AND MAINTAIN

Smaller Salaries Cited to House Committee as Factor in Lower Expense.

A navy of a quarter of a million men would be needed by the United States in time of war, Assistant Secretary Franklin D. Roosevelt today told the House naval committee. Declaring England's naval force had been trebled since the war, Mr. Roosevelt said this nation probably would need as large an increase in a war.

That the United States navy is not sufficient to cope with a first-class power if the American policy is to protect all its coast and possessions and relations with pan-American countries, was Mr. Roosevelt's opinion.

Comparing navies of this country and Germany, the assistant secretary declared Germany's costs much less to build and maintain, also Japan's, and that larger salaries to American officers account for a large part of the greater expense as compared with the German fleet.

Mobilization in 1912 "a Joke."

United States naval construction is being "speeded up," Mr. Roosevelt insisted, as fast as possible. That the Atlantic fleet mobilization in 1912 under the last republican administration was "a joke" was also asserted by the assistant secretary.

The assistant secretary declined to discuss policy questions on the ground that policy is solely within the jurisdiction of the House. He also refrained from making a general statement regarding naval needs, preferring to be asked for details.

He endorsed the personnel board's recommendations to increase the Marine Corps. He favored at least three brigadier generals, one for the fleet and one each for the Atlantic and Pacific fleets. He German navy officers, he said, are paid more than ours, and that the "blue envelope" method was described by the assistant secretary. He doubted if the country would approve such a plan. Returning to men needed in case of war, Mr. Roosevelt said:

Would Need 225,000 Men.

"Judging by the experience of England, whose naval forces have increased three times since the war began, by that standard we would need 225,000 men in case of war with a first-class power. That would be the outside figure for a while, for the first six months, depending on the number of ships we would build and take into the service for coast protection.

"We should have to improvise a great many ships, if we could get them, and that would take many men."

"Don't you think we ought to bring our navy up to the full efficiency at this time," asked Representative Butler.

"I think the navy is fully efficient," Mr. Roosevelt answered.

"Do you think the submarines are capable of certain purposes?"

"Could we get eighteen ready in thirty days?"

"I don't think so," he said.

The assistant secretary said the ideal would be to have every boat in full readiness, but no naval power had ever done so.

"The fleet will be that way some day, so or ever out of that here," he continued.

"I don't put this on the list of legislation which I suggested because it did not in my mind fall under the head of legislation at all, but only of incidental action for the purpose of laying the groundwork for future legislation at another session of the Congress."

Key to Successful Industry.

"The railways of the country are becoming more and more the key to its successful industry, and it seems to me of capital importance that we should lay a new groundwork of actual facts for the necessary future regulation. I know that we will want to be absolutely fair to the railroads, and it seems to me that the proposed investigation is the first step towards the fulfillment of that desire."

"I hope that you will agree with me that this important matter can be disposed of without putting any spoke in the wheels that we are now trying to make go around in the matter of legislation."

House Debating Immigration Bill.

Debate on the immigration bill was resumed in the House today. Only a few unimportant amendments were tacked onto the bill. Chairman Burnett expected passage of the bill tonight.

Democrats Will Caucus Tomorrow.

House Democrats will hold a caucus tomorrow night to determine on the party policy on the general subject of government manufacture of war munitions. A call for the purpose was issued today. The caucus is with particular reference to the project for a government armor manufacturing plant, proposed in a bill already passed by the Senate and now in the House naval committee.

Alcohol Explodes; Starts Big Fire.

BOSTON, March 28.—An explosion in a shipment of alcoholic spirits started a fire which destroyed 500 feet of one of the Boston and Maine railroad freighthouses with its contents yesterday. The loss is estimated at \$150,000.

SUPPLY PROBLEM PRINCIPAL WORRY OF GEN. PERSHING

Inability to Use Mexican Railways Seriously Hampers Villa Expedition.

GEN. FUNSTON ASKS FOR 57 MORE MOTOR TRUCKS

Stores Are Now Being Sent 250 Miles Through Barren Waste From Border Bases.

MAY HALT PURSUIT OF BANDIT

Because of Imperative Need of Lines, Army Officials Hope Way Will Be Found to Get Favorable Carranza Answer.

FIELD HEADQUARTERS.

American Expeditionary Force, Colonia Dublan, Chihuahua, March 28, by Wireless to Columbus, N. M.—Preparations for closing in on Francisco Villa in a quick cavalry drive were being pushed forward rapidly today at the field headquarters of Brig. Gen. Pershing, expeditionary commander.

EL PASO, March 28.—The pursuit of Francisco Villa may be hampered, if not actually halted, unless Mexican railroads are made available as the main line of communication for the American army in Mexico.

Military men expressed their view today after studying dispatches from the front that Villa was still in full flight southward and meeting with little if any opposition.

The American forces are more than 200 miles below the border.

Difficulties Are Increasing.

Every mile the Mexican bandit advances into the interior increases the difficulties of maintaining the already attenuated line of American communications. Motor trucks are being rushed to the army base at Columbus, N. M., to help keep up the necessary movement of supplies to the field headquarters at a point near Casas Grandes.

Every effort is being made to continue the line of transport in full operation over the rocky and sandy trails from Columbus until the de facto government gives permission to use the railroads.

There is much pessimism in army circles over the prospects of capturing Villa and it is felt that unless he is cornered within the week the bandit will have outrun his pursuers and that he will take many more soldiers and his band can be ferried out of their hiding places in the mountains.

Make No Mention of Villa.

Dispatches from the advance fighting columns, pressing Villa closely, make no mention of having come in contact with any of the bandit's men.

Juarez continues quiet and there has been a subsidence of reports that trouble is brewing along the border.

The sound of shooting in the downtown section of El Paso early today aroused little attention, as the streets were packed with soldiers and soldiers were taken into custody by the provost guard, charged with having fired the shots while intoxicated.

Supply Problem Overshadows.

SAN ANTONIO, Tex., March 28.—The supply problem continues to overshadow all other matters having to do with the punitive expedition in Mexico.

Indications from Washington that railroads will not be made available in the immediate future came as an unwelcome news to department headquarters today. Because of the imperative need for rail lines it had been hoped by officers that officials in Washington would find a way of securing a favorable answer from Gen. Carranza.

With the railroads closed to him, Gen. Pershing faces the problem of supplying Gen. Pershing's force for a considerable period by means of motor transportation and wagon trails.

Long Trip for Motor Trucks.

This means he must send great quantities of supplies a distance of 250 miles south of the border in trucks, a journey through a country that is a barren waste of sand.

In order to meet the situation he has asked for fifty-seven additional motor trucks, two of which are being sent today. A total of 107 trucks are already in operation, and two additional companies will be added upon the receipt of a favorable answer from the border.

Gen. Pershing is expecting a dispatch today from Gen. Pershing giving the latest information concerning the pursuit of Villa. According to dispatches from American cavalrymen are twenty miles behind the fleeing band.

Alarming Stories Follow

Reports of a Bandit-Raid on the C. E. Kelly Ranch

EL PASO, Tex., March 28.—There was a very noticeable increase in the tension along the border today following the reported raid last night on the ranch of C. E. Kelly, former mayor of El Paso, by Mexican bandits. The band is thirty-two miles east of here and a mile and a half from the border.

The alarm was given first by L. N. Barker, foreman of the Kelly ranch. Barker said he saw a number of mount-